

CLAIMS

1. Method for determining the moisture content of bulk material, in particular growing substrate such as potting soil, characterized in that

- the volume of a quantity of bulk material is determined,
- the weight of the quantity of bulk material is determined,
- the specific density is then determined from the volume and the weight, and
- finally the moisture content is determined by comparison with a table.

2. Method for preparing bulk material, in particular potting soil, with a predetermined moisture content, characterized in that

- the volume of a quantity of bulk material is determined,
- the weight of the quantity of bulk material is determined, and
- water is then added to the quantity of bulk material until the weight associated with the desired moisture content is obtained.

3. Method as claimed in claim 2, characterized in that after water has been added the bulk material is mixed with the water.

4. Apparatus for determining the moisture content of bulk material, in particular potting soil, characterized in that the apparatus comprises:

- a supply vessel placed on a weighing device;
- a feed device for feeding predetermined volumes to the supply vessel;
- a discharge device for the supply vessel; and
- a computer for determining the moisture content from the supplied volume and the measured weight.

5. Apparatus as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that the feed device comprises a

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conveyor belt which comprises a measuring member for measuring the height of the bulk material carried along on the conveyor belt, and that the computer is adapted to determine from the measured height the quantity of material carried along on the conveyor belt.

6. Apparatus as claimed in claim 5, characterized in that the measuring member comprises a laser source and a laser detector, wherein these elements are adapted to determine the height of the material carried along on the conveyor belt.

7. Apparatus as claimed in claim 5 or 6, characterized in that a levelling device is placed above the conveyor belt upstream of the measuring member for levelling to a uniform height the material carried along on the conveyor belt.

8. Apparatus as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that the feed device comprises a chute in which are placed carriers which are mounted on a movable chain and which are each adapted to carry along a predetermined volume.

9. Apparatus as claimed in any of the claims 4-8, characterized in that the supply vessel is tiltable.

10. Apparatus as claimed in any of the claims 4-9, characterized in that the apparatus is also suitable for preparing bulk material with the desired moisture content in that a water supply device is placed above the supply vessel in order to supply water to the supply vessel.

11. Apparatus as claimed in any of the claims 4-10, characterized in that the apparatus is provided with a dispensing device for dispensing additives.
